distributed further north-west in parts of Uttar Pradesh and Nepal. Recently, Das (1991) has also recorded *M.t. indopeninsularis* from Corbett National Park (Uttar Pradesh). The specimens observed at Simbalbara Sanctuary are thus suspected to be *M.t. indopeninsularis*. Nonetheless, the presence of this species in Himachal Pradesh, northwest of its previously known range, is a record of considerable importance. We suggest that more survey and collection of specimens be made for allocation of subspecies and commenting further on their distribution.

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ANAND PENDHARKAR
Wildlife Institute of India, Post Box No. 18,
Chandrabani, Dehra Dun 248 001.

TOM JENNER
Institute of Ecology and Resource Management,
University of Edinburgh, West Mains Road,
Edinburgh, EH9 3JG, U.K.

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23. PRESENCE OF THE COMMON INDIAN BRONZEBACK SNAKE (*DENDRELAPHIS TRISTIS*) IN RAJASTHAN

The common Indian bronzeback or Tree Snake (*Dendrelaphis tristis*) is a highly arboreal snake, living almost entirely on trees and shrubs. According to Daniel (1983 THE BOOK OF INDIAN REPTILES), it is distributed in peninsular India, Gangetic Plain and Himalayan foothills. It is worth noting that this snake is present in the southern part of Rajasthan State where it is locally called *Udani*, i.e., one which flies. This name is derived from the rapid movement of the snake. This snake has been seen by me many times in the dense forests of Jhadol and Ogana Forest Ranges of Udaipur (North) Forest Division. These forests are rich in plant species. The major plant species are: *Tectona grandis*, *Butea monosperma*, *Wrightia tinctoria*. *W. tomentosa*, *Diospyros melanoxylon*, *D. montana* var. *cordifolia*, *Santalum album*, *Saccopetalum tomentosa*, *Sterculia urens*, *Lannea coromandelica*, *Alangium salvifolium*, *Anogeissus latifolia*, *A. sericea*, *Acacia catechu*, *Albizia procera*, *Dalbergia paniculata*, *Syzygium heyneanum*, *Mitragyna parvifolia*, *Aegle marmelosa*, *Limonia acidissima*, *Pongamia pinnata*, etc. The density of vegetation is high in many pockets, where crown contact stage prevails round the year even in the summer. This condition presumably facilitates movement of the tree snake from one tree to another.

July 29, 1994

SATISH KUMAR SHARMA
Range Forest Officer,
Aravalli Afforestation Programme, Jhadol (F.),
Distt. Udaipur (Raj.) 313 702.

24. UNUSUAL CAUDAL SCALES OF BUFF-STRIPED KEELBACK *AMPHIESMA STOLATA* (LINNAEUS)

On 18.7.1993, I captured a 417 mm long buff-striped keelback snake, *Amphiesma stolata* (Linnaeus) from Mahipal Reserve Forest Block in southern Aravallis. Its caudal scales had an unusual arrangement pattern. The arrangement of anal and caudal scales (from cloaca to tail end) is given below:

Anal	Paired
Caudals (1 to 4)	Paired

Caudals (5 to 13)	Unpaired
Caudals (14 to 27)	Paired
Caudals (28 to 29)	Unpaired
Caudals (30 to 40)	Paired
Caudal (Terminal)	Unpaired.

Subsequently, I captured two more snakes from the same locality but both had the usual paired caudal scales, except the terminal one.

June 11, 1994
SATISH KUMAR SHARMA
Range Forest Officer,
Aravalli Afforestation Programme, Jhadol (F.),
Udaipur (Raj.) 313 702.

25. THROAT COLORATION IN FEMALE *MICROHYLA ORNATA* (DUM. & BIBR.)

Microhyla ornata (Dum. & Bibr.) is a small microhylid. In Rajasthan, this species is confined to the southern Aravallis (McCann 1943, Mansukhani and Murthy 1964, Sharma, in press).

Daniel (1963) and Mansukhani and Murthy (1964) have described the coloration of this species. According to them, the colour of the ventrum of this species is white, although throat and chest may be stippled with brown. During the breeding period (i.e. rainy season) the throat of males appear black. In July, 1993, I collected many gravid females from various localities in Udaipur district. The throats of all the females were black similar to the males. I have seen the same coloration during the winter. Hence differenciation of sexes on the basis of throat coloration is not possible.

June 11, 1994
SATISH KUMAR SHARMA
Range Forest Officer,
Aravalli Afforestation Programme,
Jhadol (F.), Udaipur (Raj.) 313 702.

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26. ADDITIONS TO THE LEPIDOCEPHALID FISHES OF BIHAR, INDIA

INTRODUCTION

During the course of studies on the hill-stream fishes along the Nepal-Bihar border, three specimens of Lepidocephalids were collected from the river Pandai of Bihar, which, on examination, were identified as *Lepidocephalus annandalei* (Chaudhuri), *L. guntea* (Hamilton) and *L. thermalis* (Valenciennes). The river Pandai rises in Sumeswar range of Nepal territory and enters the district of West Champaran through a pass between the Sumeswar range and Churiaghat at Bhikhanathori. It is joined by several rivulets arising from the Someswar range and ultimately drains into the Ganges river system. A perusal of existing Indian literature on the ichthyofauna including Das (1939), Menon (1950), Hora (1953), Jhingran (1956) and Venkateshwarlu (1977) reveals that two of the loaches, *Lepidocephalus annandalei* (Chaudhuri) and *L. thermalis* (Valenciennes) were not previously recorded from Bihar, and are, therefore, additions to the ichthyofauna of Bihar.

DESCRIPTIONS

Lepidocephalus annandalei (Choudhuri)

Local name: Nakati; **English name:** Annandale loach.

Material examined: 1 ex., 47 mm TL, Bhikhanathri, Pandai river, Bihar, S.K. Mishra : 6 April 1978.

Diagnostic features: D ii 7; P 8; V 7; A ii5; C 16.

Length of head 6, depth of body 5.9, both in total length. Eye diameter 4 in length of head, equal to interorbital width; predorsal length 2.5 in total length.

Barbels 2 pairs, maxillary and rostral pairs of barbels small.

Dorsal fin origin between eye and base of caudal fin. Caudal fin slightly emarginate; ventral fins nearly opposite to dorsal fin; scales indistinct.

Colour in life; Body dirty yellowish; a black band extending mid-laterally from posterior margin of head to base of caudal fin; head with numerous black spots; dorsal fin with three black spots, anal with two and caudal fin with two dark spots encircled in white rings.

Distribution: Northern India, Nepal and Bangladesh. The present record is a noteworthy addition to the fish fauna of Bihar.